

etc

83934

26 Jan 1923

No. 14488

INDEX BUREAU
FEB 3 1923
DEPT. OF STATE

Copy heretofore has been sent to
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of dispatch

Conc. S. J. C. A. E. A.

Department of State
Noted. B.E.D.
FEB 12 1923

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL FEB 13 1923

London: England.

January 26, 1923.

Division of

Political and Economic Information

SUBJECT: British Solomon Islands Protectorate.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 5 1923
DIVISION OF
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

CONSULAR BUREAU
FEB 21 1923
DEPT. OF STATE
Sir:

Department of State
FEB 17 1923
DIVISION OF
Political and Economic Information
D. O. 2
FEB 18 1923
DIRECTOR of the CONSULAR SERVICE

INDEX BUREAU
8629.00/-

I have the honor to enclose herewith for the information of the
Department Colonial Report, No. 1148, entitled "British Solomon Islands
Protectorate." Additional copies can be secured, if they are desired.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Irving N. Linnell

IRVING N. LINNELL.
American Consul in Charge.

DEPT. OF STATE

FEB 18 1923

ACKNOWLEDGED

FILED
FEB 21 1923

610. INL. BC

Enclosure: One copy of the above.

THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE RETURNED
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FROM THE

IMPERIAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY,
LONDON, W. 1.

83934

COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1148.

BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS PROTECTORATE.

REPORT FOR 1921-22.

(For Report for 1919-20 see No. 1060.
The statistics for 1920-21 have been in-
corporated in the Report for 1921-22.)



LONDON:

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1923

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No. 1148.

BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS PROTECTORATE.

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT FOR 1921-22.*

I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The cost of living continues high. A recent Commission of Inquiry found that the decrease in the cost is but three per cent.

The yield of copra showed a slight increase, but the value owing to a fallen market was considerably less than the previous year. A new item of export was timber logs.

Doctor Lambert of the Rockefeller Hookworm Campaign Survey visited the Group during the year and found hookworm-infected natives throughout the islands in large numbers. His report will be awaited with great interest. It is hoped that with treatment there will be an improvement in the health and efficiency of the native population.

The first meeting of the newly established Advisory Council was held during the year and numerous matters were placed before the members for consideration.

Owing to lack of transport accurate returns of the population have not been obtained. District Officers have devoted much time and attention to this purpose during the year, and on some islands a careful record of births and deaths has been made. Most instances show a diminishing birth-rate, the most marked being San Cristoval. Depopulation is attributable to various causes, amongst which is the lack of an adequate medical staff and consequent inability to cope successfully with epidemics of dysentery and influenza.

The reclaiming of a 6½ acre swamp in the heart of Tulagi was commenced in April, 1921; of this area the reclamation of some 5 acres was completed during the year and is a considerable and necessary improvement.

II. GOVERNMENT FINANCE.

The total Revenue of the Protectorate for the year ended 31st March, 1922, was £56,432 19s. 5d., being an increase of £4,117 17s. 1d. over and above the total for the preceding year.

The total expenditure was £45,450 17s. 7d., being an increase of £3,788 17s. 4d. as compared with the year 1920-21.

* A Sketch Map will be found in the Report for 1914-15, No. 867 [Cd. 7622-58].

The total revenue and expenditure for the last five years has been as follows :—

			Revenue.			Expenditure.		
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1917-18	..	..	30,563	19	11	26,120	14	3
1918-19	..	..	29,476	1	1	30,205	5	2
1919-20	..	..	34,544	13	7	37,639	13	5
1920-21	..	..	52,315	2	4	41,662	0	3
1921-22	..	..	56,432	19	5	45,450	17	7

The Native Tax was collected during 1921-22 for the first time.

The Statements of Assets and Liabilities for the years ended 31st March, 1921, and 31st March, 1922, are as follows :—

	Assets.		Liabilities.	
	1921.	1922.	1921.	1922.
Cash—	£	£	£	£
Treasury ..	1,681 1 2	1,412 14 6	—	—
Bank of New Zealand ..	7,991 9 1	12,588 17 8	—	—
High Commissioner ..	1,645 16 0	7,511 5 1	—	—
Crown Agents ..	278 10 9	325 13 11	—	—
Sydney Agents ..	960 13 9	1,602 0 1	—	—
Remittances ..	2,056 17 11	4,023 3 7	—	—
Deposits ..	—	—	4,985 4 9	4,953 7 1
Advances ..	688 11 9	114 14 11	—	—
Suspense ..	—	—	154 4 0	10 5 2
Imprests ..	20 0 0	37 6 5	—	—
Unallocated Stores ..	1,246 3 4	259 13 0	—	—
Investments—				
Fixed Deposits ..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	—	—
Crown Agents ..	500 0 0	—	—	—
War Loan Debentures ..	3,000 0 0	3,000 0 0	—	—
Excess of Assets over Liabilities	—	—	17,929 15 0	28,911 16 11
	23,069 3 9	33,875 9 2	23,069 3 9	33,875 9 2

III. TRADE AND AGRICULTURE.

Returns of imports and exports are given as accurately as possible in the following statements:—

Return of Imports, 1920-21 and 1921-22.

				1920-21.	1921-22.
				£	£
Machinery	..	..	..	7,278	8,449
Kerosene	..	..	..	5,184	4,639
Benzine	..	..	..	9,128	12,360
Tobacco	..	..	..	23,532	26,407
Spirits ..	..	..	..	1,913	3,063
Wine ..	..	..	..	999	1,235
Beer ..	..	..	..	2,685	3,292
Drapery	..	..	..	41,864	29,519
Rice ..	..	..	..	36,749	28,177
Sugar ..	..	..	..	4,301	3,077
Timber	..	..	..	9,923	6,595
Hardware	..	..	..	9,391	8,944
Meats ..	..	..	..	9,762	9,933
Fish ..	..	..	..	10,155	3,677
Biscuits	..	..	..	16,612	10,183
Bags and Sacks	..	..	..	13,029	6,877
Miscellaneous ..	..	..	..	122,240	85,137
				<u>324,745</u>	<u>251,564</u>

(For Return of Exports see opposite page).

IV. LEGISLATION.

The most important Regulations passed between 31st March, 1921, and 31st March, 1922, are the King's Regulation to provide for the creation of an Advisory Council in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate and the King's Regulation to amend the law relating to the recruiting, engagement and employment of native labourers within the British Solomon Islands Protectorate.

V. EDUCATION.

Education is entirely in the hands of the various Missions. The natives in this respect are very backward.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS.

The Wireless Station has been doing good work and communication was maintained throughout the year without a break. An attempt was made to maintain communication direct with Suva, but it was found impossible owing to atmospherics at the time the attempt was made (during the North-west Trades' Season).

Internal communication throughout the islands of the Group is confined to the regular itinerary of Messrs. Burns, Philp and Company's steamers, through the Western portion of the islands, to occasional auxiliary vessels belonging to planters and traders, and cannot be said to be satisfactory.

RETURN OF EXPORTS 1917-18 TO 1921-22.

	1917-18.	1918-19.	1919-20.	1920-21.	1921-22.
Beche de Mer	10 tons	4 tons 6 cwt.	—	2½ tons	5 tons
Value.. .. .	£947	£381	—	£603	£815
Copra	6,943 tons	9,891 tons	8,160 tons	11,127 tons	12,109 tons
Value.. .. .	£130,750	£153,395	£194,046	£300,206	£173,916
Black Lip Shell	—	—	6 cwt.	6 cwt.	14 cwt.
Value.. .. .	—	—	£8	£5	£16
Green Snail Shell.. .. .	33 tons	12 tons	12 tons	55 tons	5 tons
Value.. .. .	£531	£431	£273	£994	£100
Mother Pearl Shell	7 cwt.	—	7 tons	6¾ tons	1 ton 17 cwt.
Value.. .. .	£35	—	£482	£449	£167
Trocas Shell	219 tons	583½ tons	280 tons	375½ tons	129½ tons
Value.. .. .	£4,763	£13,211	£13,638	£22,805	£3,476
Turtle Shell	1½ cwt.	5 cwt.	—	6 cwt.	3¼ cwt.
Value.. .. .	£142	£101	—	£740	£268
Rubber	15 cwt.	—	10 cwt.	7½ cwt.	—
Value.. .. .	£174	£25	£125	£85	—
Ivory Nuts	151½ tons	163½ tons	259 tons	871 tons	71 tons
Value.. .. .	£1,342	£1,762	£3,270	£10,385	£648
Timber Logs	—	—	—	—	330,393 sq. ft.
Value.. .. .	—	—	—	—	£3,452
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	—	—
Value.. .. .	£4,078	£817	£699	£274	£29
Total Value	£142,762	£170,123	£212,541	£336,546	£182,887

The "Southern Cross," owned by the Melanesian Mission, called in the Group once during the year from New Zealand.

Unfortunately the Government vessel "Belama" was wrecked and has not yet been replaced. The need for a vessel is great.

The postal service outside the regular itinerary of Messrs. Burns, Philp and Company's boat is maintained, in an intermittent fashion, with other parts of the Group through chance auxiliary vessels of traders and planters.

The chief postal centres are Tulagi, Gizo and Shortlands.

Tulagi is the headquarters of the Protectorate. The District Officers stationed in separate districts throughout the Protectorate act as Postmasters.

A money order service exists with the Commonwealth of Australia through whose agency money can be remitted to various parts of the world.

During the year, 201 mails were despatched from Tulagi as follows :—

England 19, Australia 19, Inter-island 163.

R R KANE,
Resident Commissioner.

COLONIAL REPORTS, Etc.

The following recent reports, etc., relating to His Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained from the sources indicated on the title page:—

ANNUAL.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Colony, etc.</i>	<i>Year.</i>
1111	Malta	1920-1921
1112	Uganda	1920
1113	Leeward Islands	1920-1921
1114	Nigeria	1921
1115	Mauritius	1920
1116	Jamaica	"
1117	Cyprus	1921
1118	Weihaiwei	"
1119	Gold Coast	1920
1120	Gambia	"
1121	Gambia	1921
1122	Kenya Colony and Protectorate	1920-1921
1123	British Guiana	1921
1124	Grenada	"
1125	Zanzibar	"
1126	Northern Territories of the Gold Coast	"
1127	Gibraltar	"
1128	St. Vincent	"
1129	St. Helena	"
1130	Fiji	"
1131	Basutoland	1921-1922
1132	Bermuda	1921
1133	Bechuanaland Protectorate	1921-1922
1134	Barbados	"
1135	Trinidad	1921
1136	British Honduras	"
1137	Ceylon	"
1138	Swaziland	"
1139	Hongkong	"
1140	Straits Settlements	"
1141	St. Lucia	"
1142	Ashanti	"
1143	Jamaica	"
1144	Falkland Islands	1920
1145	Bahamas	1921-1922
1146	Seychelles	1921
1147	Turks and Caicos Islands	"

MISCELLANEOUS.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Colony, etc.</i>	<i>Subject.</i>
83	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1910.
84	West Indies	Preservation of Ancient Monuments, etc.
85	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1911.
86	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1912.
87	Ceylon	Mineral Survey.
88	Imperial Institute	Oilseeds, Oils, etc.
89	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1913.
90	St. Vincent	Roads and Land Settlement.
91	East Africa Protectorate	Geology and Geography of the northern part of the Protectorate.
92	Colonies—General	Fishes of the Colonies.
93	Pitcairn Island	Report on a visit to the Island by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

~~WE~~
Index
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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

GRAY

FROM

MELBOURNE

Dated October 10, 1927

Recd. 7.42 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

October 10, 5 p.m.

According to the local press cruiser ADELAIDE has been despatched from Sydney October 10th to Solomon Islands in order to protect white inhabitants. In recent native uprising in Malaita a score of native police and sailors and two white officers were massacred.

GARRELS



File

INDEXED BUREAU
862 G. 00/1

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OCT 11 1927

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 847.00/88 FOR #241

FROM Melbourne (..... Garrels) DATED Nov.1,1927
TO NAME 1-1127 GPO

REGARDING: Australian Cruiser to protect life and assist British
Administration in the Solomon Islands.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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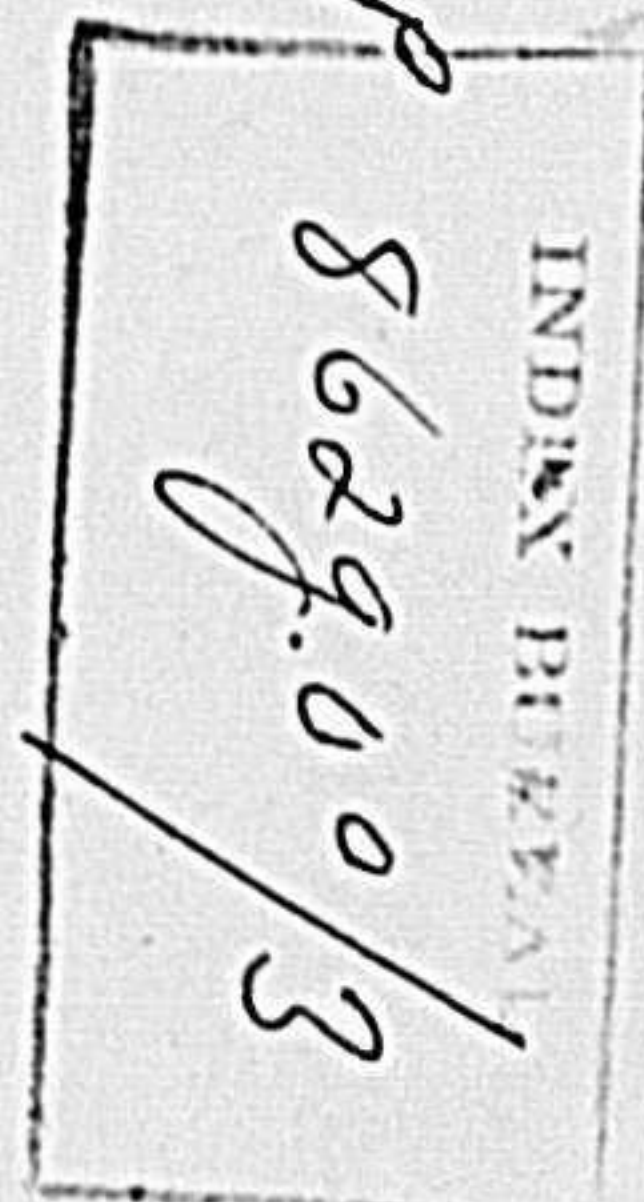
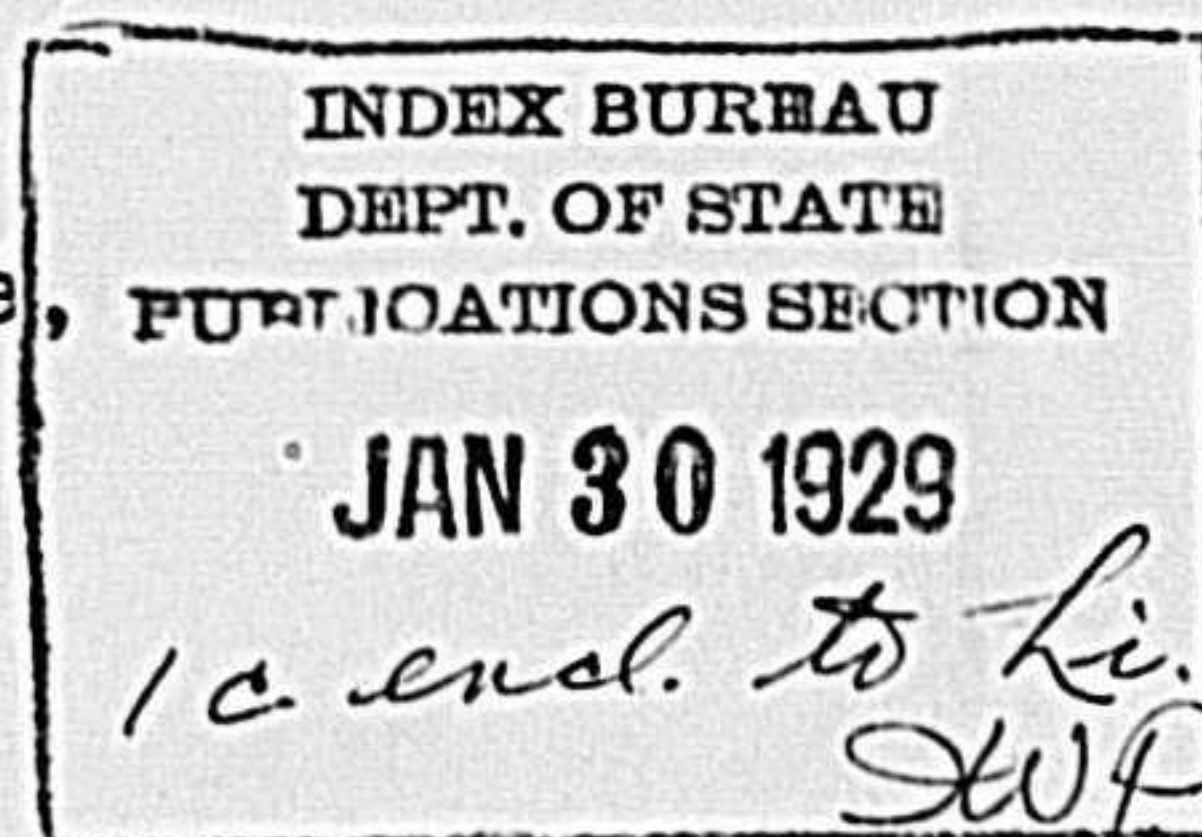
London, January 14, 1929.

8629-06

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to be filed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
In U. S. A.	



The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.



Sir,

1/ I have the honor to transmit, enclosed herewith, for the Department's information, copies in triplicate of the British publication, entitled, BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS PROTECTORATE - REPORT OF COMMISSIONER APPOINTED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES TO INQUIRE INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH MURDEROUS ATTACKS TOOK PLACE IN 1927 ON GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON GUADALCANAL AND MALAITA.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

For the Ambassador:

Ray Atherton

Ray Atherton,
Counselor of Embassy.

Enclosure:
3 copies Cmd. 3248.

FEB 1 1929



BRITISH SOLOMON ISLANDS PROTECTORATE

Report of Commissioner appointed by the
Secretary of State for the Colonies to
inquire into the circumstances in which
murderous attacks took place in 1927 on
Government Officials on Guadalcanal and
Malaita

8629.00/3

*Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty
January, 1929*

LONDON.

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1929

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**Letter from Colonial Office to Lieut.-Colonel Sir H. C. Moorhouse,
Kt., C.M.G., D.S.O.**

DOWNING STREET, S.W.1.

14th April, 1928.

(Extract.)

SIR,

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Amery to confirm your selection as a Commissioner to proceed to the British Solomon Islands Protectorate with the following terms of reference :—

“ To inquire into and report upon the circumstances in which murderous attacks took place on Government officials at Vera-kone, Guadalcanal, in February, 1927, and at Sinarango, Malaita, in October, 1927.”

You will be at liberty to extend your stay in the Protectorate beyond the period of approximately three weeks if in your opinion that period should not be adequate for the investigation.

I am, &c.,

G. GRINDLE.

**Letter from Lieut.-Colonel Sir H. C. Moorhouse, Kt., C.M.G.,
D.S.O., to Colonial Office.**

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,

SUVA, FIJI,

22nd September, 1928.

SIR,

I have the honour to report that in accordance with the instructions contained in your letter dated 14th April, 1928, I left England on the 10th May, arrived in Tulagi on the 5th July, and left on 1st September for Suva where I arrived on 20th September.

2. I enclose in duplicate my report on the circumstances connected with the murders at Guadalcanal and Malaita and on certain questions of administration that came to my knowledge during the course of my investigations.

3. A copy of the report has been handed to His Excellency the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific for whose kindness and hospitality I am very grateful and with whom I have had the opportunity of discussing it during my stay in Suva.

4. I gladly take this opportunity of expressing my keen appreciation and thanks to the Resident Commissioner and other officials for their readiness in providing me with such information as I required and to the various planters and missionary societies who afforded me the opportunity of visiting their plantations and institutions and acquiring a knowledge of the conditions under which the natives worked and the efforts being made for their education. My special thanks are due to Mr. H. G. Pilling who, as representative of the High Commissioner, accompanied me to the Solomon Islands and was my right-hand man during the whole enquiry.

I have, &c.,

H. C. MOORHOUSE.

REPORT.

(Extract.)

General Conditions.

It is necessary, I think, to preface this Report with a brief review of the existing conditions in the Protectorate, in order that the administrative problems and any criticisms or recommendations appearing in the Report may be more readily understood.

The Group of islands forming the Protectorate consists of the three larger islands of Malaita, Ysabel, and Guadalcanal, each with an area of about 2,000 square miles, and a number of smaller islands scattered over a sea area of approximately 40,000 square miles. The population consists of 500 whites, about 90 Chinese or Asiatics, and 150,000 (approximate) natives.

The Headquarters of the Government and the seat of the Resident Commissioner is at Tulagi, a small island with an excellent harbour and centrally situated for administrative purposes, but with no indigenous native population. The rest of the Protectorate is divided into seven Districts, which will be increased to eight when a scheme for dividing Malaita into two separate Districts is complete, each under a District Officer who has both executive and judicial powers. There is a Chief Magistrate and Legal Adviser stationed at Tulagi who hears all local cases arising in Tulagi or the Island of Florida and more serious cases sent in from the Districts. There are also the usual Departments such as the Treasury, Lands, &c., centralized at Tulagi.

With the exception of Tulagi where, in addition to the Government officials, there are the employees at the headquarters of the three principal firms trading in the Protectorate, the European population is widely scattered in plantations and small trading or mission stations. At Tulagi there is a small Club with tennis courts and a nine-hole golf course, and in some of the larger plantations there are facilities for recreation, but generally speaking the opportunities for ordinary social intercourse are few and far between.

The characteristics, habits, and customs of the natives and their willingness to accept the discipline of orderly government vary to such an extent that the problem of their administration under any fixed rules bristles with difficulties. In the smaller islands which are easily accessible, on the Island of Ysabel, and in a coastal fringe round the islands of Malaita and Guadalcanal where missionary influence is strong, the natives have proved tractable and amenable to Government measures with some recognition of the advantages of peace and good order. Among the tribes inhabiting the highlands of the Island of Malaita and to a lesser extent on Guadalcanal, it may safely be said that the "King's Writ" certainly does not "run" and only "walks" when accompanied by

a show of force, and yet at the same time it is almost exclusively from these areas that the supply of labour for the plantations is drawn.

Educational facilities, except such as are provided by the various missionary societies, are non-existent. It is estimated that there are about 7,000 children attending the mission schools, and, though the general average standard is low, the schools, apart altogether from their Christianising influence, are undoubtedly doing good and useful work in inculcating habits of discipline, order, and hygiene.

It appears to be the general belief that the native population is decreasing and that there is a preponderance of males over females, but such census figures as are available do not permit of any definite pronouncement on this point. Infant mortality is undoubtedly high, and other scourges, such as yaws and hookworm, against which an intensive campaign has recently been started, are, one might almost say, common to the people generally.

There is a wireless station at Tulagi, beyond which communication with the outside world is limited to a six-weekly steamer service connecting with Sydney and Brisbane. This steamer makes a tour of the Islands, occupying roughly sixteen days, collecting and discharging passengers, mails, and cargo for and from Australia. There are no roads worthy of the name and communication between places on the same island is carried out by water. Each District Officer, except in the Shortland District, is provided with an auxiliary motor vessel. There is a steamer of 300 tons used by the Resident Commissioner on his visits of inspection and for the transport of officials and stores.

There is no income tax, but a native poll tax on all males between the ages of 16 and 60 varying in different Districts from £1 to 5s. It produces about £10,000 a year. The import tariff is practically 12½ per cent. *ad valorem* with a few specific duties. Export duties are levied on copra, 12s. 6d. per ton; trocas shell, £1 10s. a ton; and ivory nuts, 15s. a ton. The main export is copra. The revenue for the year ending 31st March, 1928, was £75,664, and the expenditure £73,993. There is no public debt, and the surplus of assets over liabilities on that date was £70,012.

Guadalcanal Murders.

On the night of the 14th February, 1927, three members of the armed constabulary named Funansua, Gena, and Veki, and a boy named Kekipeta who accompanied them, were murdered at the village of Verakone on Guadalcanal by persons belonging to the Kolokumaha tribe. Nine men were tried for the murders, of whom two were acquitted and seven found guilty and sentenced to death; one, Tuva, was strongly recommended to mercy and was reprieved. The other six were hanged. The three policemen had been sent by

the District Officer to effect the arrest of Tuatakombu and were returning with their prisoner to Aola, the District Headquarters, when they were murdered.

The Verimbasia section of the Kolokumaha tribe, that is, the section of it directly concerned in the murders, had a bad reputation for lawlessness and were a terror to their neighbours. Their village is situated in very hilly and difficult country and they had never been visited by a District Officer. However, their leaders were not unaccustomed to coming into Aola and they had paid their tax regularly.

From all reports and information gathered during my enquiry, it is evident that two men Tuatakombu and Billy Viti (or Talolia) were the chief instigators of the murders and it will be as well to trace their careers, at all events briefly, in order to arrive at some conclusions as to the reasons for the murders.

Tuatakombu had a bad record; he had served two terms of imprisonment; he was apparently comparatively rich and had the ambition to become head of the clan or a section of it; he had built himself a house which was more pretentious than those of his immediate neighbours; and was in fact the local firebrand.

Billy Viti had worked outside the Solomon Group, had never been in trouble, and had been a village constable, and, as he himself stated at his trial, had "always worked well with the Government" but his whole attitude changed when he was fined £3 in September, 1926, under Section 3 of the Adultery Regulation (King's Regulation No. 7 of 1924), from which time he appears to have joined Tuatakombu and his party.

The circumstances leading up to the conviction of Billy Viti require explanation. On the information of a police constable named Funansua, who subsequently lost his life on the occasion of the murders, the District Officer sent for Billy Viti to come into the Headquarters, Aola, to answer a charge of adultery. Whether the messenger was also told to bring in Billy Viti's wife, Tongisain, and other parties connected with the charge is not clear, but in any case Billy Viti came in with his three wives to whom there is ample evidence to show he was properly married according to native custom. It was on the charge of committing adultery with his third wife, Tulusaia, that Billy Viti was convicted. The whole conduct of this case is most unsatisfactory. In the first place the Native Adultery Punishment Regulation, 1924, distinctly lays down that the complaint must be lodged by the wife. Such evidence as I was able to get went to show that Billy Viti's first wife would never on her own initiative have made any charge of adultery and had accepted the situation as one of ordinary native custom. It seems probable that the constable, Funansua, who laid the complaint, believed that the meaning of the Adultery Order was that no man was to have more than one wife, and Tuba, who

had been convicted of participation in the murders but was re-prieved, stated to me that Funansua had informed him that that was the new "Government law." I am also of the opinion that sufficient care was not exercised by the District Officer to ascertain whether the complaint was actually lodged by the wife as required by the law or was one worked up by the police possibly acting under a wrong interpretation of the law.

In any case it is clear that Billy Viti was labouring under a sense of injustice and after consultation with Tuatakombu proceeded to Tulagi to obtain a ruling from the Resident Commissioner as to the meaning of the Adultery Regulation, at all events as far as it affected plurality of wives. Most unfortunately at this interview no mention was made of the fact that Billy Viti had only ten days previously been punished for cohabitation with one of his own wives, and the Resident Commissioner, not unnaturally, assumed that some assurance was required from him that the Regulation did not preclude a man from having two wives if acquired in accordance with native custom. This he gave them.

Subsequent events are fully set out in the proceedings at the trial and need only be briefly recapitulated here. Tuatakombu had now received a useful ally in Billy Viti and he proceeded to call a big meeting ostensibly as a house warming for his big new house. At this meeting Tuatakombu indulged in a good deal of what is locally called "flash talk," saying the police were always troubling him, that he would not pay his tax any more, and would kill the police if they came again. News of this meeting reached the District Officer and he sent a police constable to tell Tuatakombu to come to the Headquarters at Aola to see him. This constable was driven out of the village and a subsequent patrol sent to arrest Tuatakombu reported that he was not in the village, which was practically deserted. There seems no doubt that some attempt was made to murder this patrol but was frustrated partly by the vigilance of the corporal in charge and partly because the men selected for the task funked it at the last minute. Eventually the District Officer obtained information where Tuatakombu was hiding and sent another patrol of three constables to arrest him. He was located and arrested, as also was Tuba his half brother on whose "garden" Tuatakombu was found. The patrol and the two prisoners slept that night at Verakone. Billy Viti, hearing of Tuatakombu's arrest, made arrangements for the murder of the police during the night and, in the absence of any guard, was able to carry out his plan.

I am of the opinion that the murders were not due to any general hatred of Government measures among the tribe concerned, lead to some act by which they endeavoured to throw off this, to them, intolerable yoke, but to a combination of circumstances in which the personal element mainly entered. In the first place, there

was Tuatakombo's desire for self-aggrandisement and to be recognised as the chief of the tribe, a position to which he had very little, if any, hereditary claim. Secondly, the irritating and provocative attitude of the police, more particularly Constable Funansua, towards natives who had only very recently come in touch with the Government, and, thirdly, the conviction of Billy Viti under the Adultery Regulation, as set out above, and his consequent loss of his position as Village Constable. Tuatakombo's immediate following does not appear to have been numerous, and though they may to some extent have terrorised the neighbourhood a clash between him and Billy Viti, the Government representative, would sooner or later have been inevitable and the matter could have been dealt with without much trouble. In Billy Viti, soured by what he not unnaturally considered the unjust treatment he had received, Tuatakombo suddenly found an ally instead of an opponent. The arrest of Tuatakombo, probably totally unexpected, brought matters to a head. The opportunity of murdering three constables, one of whom was the particularly detested Funansua, and at the same time liberating Tuatakombo was too good to be missed and was promptly seized by Billy Viti assisted by others of Tuatakombo's gang. I feel quite satisfied that the native tax had nothing to do with these murders. The amount 10s. is well within the capacity of the natives in this part to pay, and I am of opinion that when Tuatakombo at the big meeting announced that he would not pay the tax again it was merely his way of proclaiming his intention of opposing the Government and all its measures.

Malaita Murders.

On 4th October, 1927, between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, Mr. W. R. Bell, District Officer, Malaita, was murdered by being struck on the head by a gun barrel at Kwaiambe in the Sinarango sub-district of Malaita. The attack was prearranged, and, in the melee which immediately followed, Mr. K. C. Lillies, a cadet in the Administrative Service, a clerk named Marcus, and twelve members of the Armed Constabulary, Government employees, or domestic servants, who accompanied Mr. Bell were also killed.

I visited the scene of the outrage and received a vivid description of what happened from an eyewitness. About 11 a.m. some 250 Sinarango natives arrived at the small clearing round the "Tax House" at Kwaiambe. They were nearly all armed with native weapons, and in addition carried a small number of "Sniders"—a generic term for any form of old rifle—which they had been told to bring with them to surrender. They apparently expressed their dissatisfaction at having to give up their "Sniders" and Mr. Bell addressed them, telling them to put down their weapons, come and pay their tax, and that he would afterwards discuss the "Snider"

question with them. This does not appear to have been done in all cases, but at any rate those who came up to pay their tax did lay down their arms. The situation was then as follows. Two tables had been put out in front of the "Tax House," Mr. Bell was seated at the right-hand table and Mr. Lillies at the left, the clerk Marcus was standing in between, and at each table there were also two constables, not as a guard but to take the tax money as it was handed in; the remainder of the escort was, by Mr. Bell's orders, inside the house; the queue of natives extended from Mr. Bell's table right round the house to Mr. Lillies' table. After about twenty people at each table had paid their taxes one Basiana, who was the leader in the affair and who had laid down his gun barrel some 12 feet from Mr. Bell's table and gone up to pay his tax, returned behind the queue, picked up his gun barrel, broke through the queue, and struck Mr. Bell, who was bending over the table, on the top of the head, killing him instantly. Basiana, as he struck, shouted something in his native tongue, and instantly the sides of the house, which were only of leaf, were battered in and the police inside caught in a trap.

It is unnecessary here except briefly to recapitulate the steps taken to arrest the murderers. H.M.A.S. "Adelaide" of the Australian Navy was sent from Sydney. A local defence force of volunteers from among the planters, recruiters, etc., was raised, and a number of ex-members of the Armed Constabulary re-engaged, and, with assistance from friendly natives, by February, 1928, all opposition was at an end and practically the whole of the adult males of the Sinarango tribe had been rounded up and lodged in gaol in Tulagi.

Subsequently a Judicial Commissioner was sent from Fiji to hear the cases arising out of the murders, with the result that seven natives were condemned to death, of whom six were executed and one reprieved, and seventeen others were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

Such are the facts, but in order to arrive at any reasoned opinion of the cause of the outbreak it is necessary to review the general situation on the Island of Malaita and the measures taken for its administration. The natives of the Island at the present time may be divided into three categories; the "salt-water" natives who live on small islands built up on coral reefs, live by fishing, canoe-making, etc., who are comparatively well to do and have not to any large extent yet come under missionary influence; those inhabiting villages on the coast who have embraced Christianity and principally for security but partly to be in touch with their European pastors have moved down from the hills; the hill natives who generally speaking only visit the coast to barter the products of their gardens for fish or to enlist for service on the plantations.

The administration of the first two classes presents no particular difficulties, the "salt water" people find nothing unduly repressive in the Government measures, they enjoy greater security and freedom of movement than ever before, and have no difficulty in paying the native tax. The second class, who are entirely under missionary influence, are naturally gradually being inculcated by their teachers with habits of discipline, law, order, and hygiene. They have little real difficulty if they will work of obtaining the money to pay their tax.

The third class, the hill natives, is, therefore, the one which provides the principal problem for the Administrator. They live in scattered villages which are moved from time to time to follow their shifting methods of cultivation. Their indigenous native administration, if it can be so termed, has as its unit the "line" or "clan," a somewhat loosely-knit conglomeration of families, but with a definitely recognised head either hereditary or elected. There is very little cohesion between the lines or clans of the same tribe and no recognised head chief. They live in a country extremely difficult of access to Europeans and have retained the characteristics of bravery and truculence, which they still display even when removed from their usual environment and which makes the name "Malaita boy" a byword among the other natives of the Group. Owing to the danger of landing on the Island unless accompanied by an armed force, few Europeans had done so, and consequently the necessity for despatching any organized punitive expeditions to avenge the murders of settlers or others which had been regrettably common on other islands of the Group had not arisen in Malaita. In fact, only one such expedition, under the officer commanding H.M.S. Torch, in 1911, was sent to Malaita, and as it did not penetrate into the interior its effects were short-lived and purely local.

It was not until towards the end of 1915 that any really effective administration of this island was commanded. The late Mr. Bell was then appointed District Officer and served there continuously, except for periods of leave, until his untimely death. The proper administration of the area, with a widely scattered population of from fifty to sixty thousand, no roads worthy of the name, and a whale-boat for water transport, was a physical impossibility for a single officer. This fact was recognised by the Administration but, hampered as they were by shortage of staff during the war and the years immediately following, it was only possible to send an Assistant to Mr. Bell at infrequent intervals and for short periods. It is to the everlasting credit of the late Mr. Bell that he well-nigh achieved the impossible, as evidenced by the widespread abhorrence of the crime expressed by the natives with whom he had come into close contact, whose confidence he had gained by his interest in them and their affairs and his ever-present if sometimes stern sense of justice.

As a certain amount of prominence has been given in some quarters, not always, I fear, too well-informed, to the iniquity of the native tax and its oppressive effect upon the natives, it will be as well to examine its application, at the moment at any rate, to the Island of Malaita alone. The Native Tax Regulation came into force in 1920, but it was not until 1924 that it was applied to Malaita and then only after a most careful consideration of the question and on the recommendation of the Resident Commissioner. It is only paid by adult males between the ages of 16 and 60, and District Officers have fairly wide powers of exemption. From its inception no difficulty has been experienced in collecting the tax from the natives referred to above as the "salt water" and coastal natives. As regards the hill natives, the collections in 1924 and 1926 passed off without incident. In 1925 some difficulty was experienced in collecting the tax from the Sinarango tribe, which was the tribe eventually concerned in the murder. What happened is a little obscure, as, having overcome the difficulty, Mr. Bell did not make any report on the matter at the time. In a report dated 11th June, 1927, dealing generally with the attitude of the natives of Malaita to the Administration, Mr. Bell alludes, *inter alia*, to this incident as showing that in 1925 there was considerable resentment among the natives to Government measures, including the tax. The refusal to pay on that occasion does not seem to have been general to the tribe but was confined to some defaulters who when a few had been arrested and fined came forward and were permitted to pay their arrears without penalty. In 1927 the hill tribes, with the exception of Sinarango, again paid the tax without incident. Nothing came to my notice during the course of my enquiry which tended to show that the tax pressed particularly hardly on the Sinarango tribe. Their habits, mode of life, wealth (or poverty) seem identical with those of their immediate neighbours who had paid the tax, if not willingly, at all events without demur. On this evidence I am forced to the conclusion that the Administration was justified in extending the tax to Malaita, that it is fixed at an amount within the capacity of the poorest to pay and that the tax, *by itself*, was not sufficient to arouse in the natives an exasperation to account for their determination to kill the late Mr. Bell and his following.

It seems clear that to Basiana at any rate, who was head of one of the clans and a devil-devil man of considerable influence, the idea of the murder was no new or sudden inspiration as he had been for some time sacrificing pigs (the number has been put as high as 70) to find out if the auguries were auspicious. Suddenly his chance came; the time for the annual payment of the tax was imminent, when, if there was any resentment among the people against the Government, it would be at its keenest; "the gods" were favourable; Mr. Bell would land as usual at the "Tax

House " and give the opportunity. He enlisted on his side Noru and Mainafoa, who were the heads of two of the other principal clans of the tribe, and a big meeting was held. All the witnesses at the various trials were agreed that at this meeting Basiana took the lead and proposed that Mr. Bell and the police should be killed and that he was backed up by Noru and Mainafoa. For the purpose of the trial this somewhat bald statement was sufficient for proving the guilt or innocence of the parties, but it appears to me incredible that a great deal more than that was not said at the meeting to work the people up to a state in which they would be ready to take part in the murder, particularly as there is evidence that there were waverers at the meeting who were only brought to heel by Basiana playing his trump card the " big swear " against which apparently no Malaita man could stand.

It does not require much imagination to picture Basiana and the other leaders pointing out that here was an unique opportunity, favoured by " the gods," of getting rid once and for all of the Government who had interfered with their playful habit of promiscuous murder, and arrested and hanged their people for what was in their eyes justifiable homicide, who had substituted a paltry fine or short term of imprisonment for the death sentence for adultery, who were endeavouring to clean up their villages and force their pigs into styes where they had to be fed, and who finally had ordered them to give up their " Sniders." It must be remembered that the natives believed that Mr. Bell and his police were " the Government " and that if they were disposed of they could return to their homes in the hills and revert to their old habits and practices without fear of any further interference or reprisals. In fairness to the Administration it must be recorded that the calling in of the " Sniders " was done on Mr. Bell's own initiative and without the knowledge or consent of the Resident Commissioner.

I have come to the conclusion that it was no single act or administrative measure of the Government which led to the murder, but the combination of circumstances set out in the two preceding paragraphs. All administrative measures for the establishment of law and order must, on their inception, appear repressive to primitive natives who had previously lived under the *lex talionis*, and much depends on the tact and discretion with which they are introduced, particularly amongst tribes of a warlike nature and a reputation for bravery such as the hill men of Malaita. I feel, therefore, that it is desirable to record that everything goes to show that the late Mr. Bell had dealt with these people with great patience and forbearance and to express the belief that his failure to take defensive precautions, though warned that an attack was probable, was due to his desire to do nothing that might appear provocative and to his belief that his influence with the people was sufficient to prevent matters coming to a head.

Sinarango Detainees.

Shortly before my departure from England, copies of the following documents were sent me for my consideration. Despatches from the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific to the Secretary of State dated 17th February, 1928, and 10th March, 1928, and a telegram from him dated 26th April, 1928.

This correspondence dealt in the main with the disposal of the Sinarango natives detained at Tulagi who were not to be indicted on the capital charges or minor charges connected with the murder, but whose immediate liberation was undesirable, and on the morning of my departure I received a copy of the telegram from the Secretary of State to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific dated 7th May, 1928.

As two months had elapsed between the date of despatch of the last telegram and my arrival in the Protectorate and the detainees were still housed in the gaol at Tulagi, it seemed to me that my first duty should be to ascertain the condition of the detainees and their dependents and examine a scheme which had been put forward for the settlement of the whole tribe on the Island of Ysabel, in order that I might be in a position to make representations for their final disposal as soon as possible.

The situation on my arrival on 6th July was as follows :—

Natives originally arrested	...	...	...	...	198
Executed	...	...	...	...	6
Sentenced to terms of imprisonment	...	...	...	...	18
Already repatriated	...	...	...	...	15
Died	...	...	...	...	25
Still under detention	...	...	...	...	134—198

Of those still under detention 73 were married; their wives and families were either being given shelter in the mission villages of the South Sea Evangelical Mission or the Seventh Day Adventist Mission in Uru, a few miles from the scene of the murder, were living with relatives among neighbouring tribes, or in a few cases had returned to their own villages. From such information as was available it appeared that the mat houses in the villages had suffered considerably from the weather and that the supply of food was scanty, though not, as I had anticipated, entirely non-existent.

I discussed matters fully with the Resident Commissioner, Mr. Kane, and Captain Turner, who as Superintendent of Prisons had been in charge of the detainees since their arrival, and had several interviews with the detainees during which at my suggestion each clan, of which there were five in the tribe, put forward a headman to represent the clan, with whom the Government could deal and through whom all orders would be issued. In two of the clans who had not taken a very active part in the murder the headmen already existed, but in the other three it was necessary to elect

successors to one killed during the massacre (Manafoa), one who had died in prison (Noru), and one who had been hanged (Basiana). They were given every opportunity to discuss matters among themselves within the gaol precincts and no sort of pressure was put upon them to influence their decisions. The elections appeared to be unanimous, and in all cases subsequent investigations showed that the man elected had at all events some hereditary claim to the position.

It was very evident at the interview that I had with the detainees that they had had a very sharp and salutary lesson. Any previous idea that the Government began and ended with the District Officer and his handful of police and that even if an European came to their village they had only to disappear into the bush to escape any interference has received its final quietus. I was also impressed with the way they elected and put forward their headmen, the manner in which the headmen spoke at the meeting, and the obvious desire that future dealings with the Government should be carried out through those headmen.

As a result I came to the conclusion that to add deportation to another island to the punishment these people had already received would be unnecessarily drastic. To people among whom ancestor worship is part of their daily life, deportation means a complete uprooting and the destruction of all their institutions and generally results in the decay and gradual extinction of the tribe or race. I therefore decided to recommend the repatriation of these people and sent the following telegram to His Excellency the High Commissioner in Fiji :—

“ Urgent. 9th July. After consultation with Kane and Pilling and interview with detainees at which they voluntarily put forward nominees to replace deceased chiefs, Basiana, Noru, Mainafoa, and nominees have expressed readiness to obey Government orders, have decided to recommend that detainees be allowed to return to their country. There can be no doubt that detention has had effect of showing them the power of the Government but it will be advisable to keep police patrol in striking distance of area for some time. Details of repatriation will require to be worked out but general idea is to allow married men to return first and collect women who are scattered and thus allow for cultivation to be at once resumed. It will be necessary at first to supply food but King in charge of patrol reports considerable young foodstuff coming on. Would be glad if your general approval to scheme could be communicated to Resident Commissioner as soon as possible so that start could be made with arrangements ”.

Pending the receipt of a reply I proceeded to Uru, where most of the refugee women were, and Kwaiambe, the scene of the murder, on the “ Ranadi ”—a vessel of some 300 tons which has

practically solved the problem of perpetual motion. While there I had an opportunity of discussing matters with Mr. Norman Deck of the South Sea Evangelical Mission, who works among the natives of this area. Mr. Deck was originally in favour of the deportation scheme, but I found that he had changed his views and now realised that the action taken by the Government and the arrest of practically the whole male population of Sinarango had so impressed the people of Malaita generally that the Sinarango people might safely be allowed to return home.

On my return to Tulagi on the 15th July I received a copy of His Excellency's telegram of the 12th July to the Resident Commissioner approving of repatriation. After discussing the situation with the Resident Commissioner the following arrangements were decided upon.

Owing to transport considerations the detainees could only be repatriated in two batches and there were obvious reasons therefore why the married men and headmen should be sent first. Mr. King, who with a patrol of 25 specially selected constables or re-enlisted ex-constables had for the last five months been working through the hill tribes of Southern Malaita, contiguous to, and presenting much the same problems as, those of the Sinarango tribe, was selected to carry out the repatriation on the spot. Having called at Uru and warned the women to return to their villages he was to proceed to Kwaiambe and land the first batch of detainees, providing them with a week's ration of rice at the rate of 1 lb. per head per day for themselves and their dependents, and send them to their homes. He was then to proceed to Kwaisube, some four hours' march inland and centrally situated to the various villages, and make a base camp from which further rations would be issued. He was then to visit the villages and as far as possible make a survey of the local food supplies available, returning to Kwaiambe in time to meet the second batch, the single men, who would arrive a fortnight later. The head of each clan was to send boys to Kwaisube to draw the second weeks' ration. The frequency and amount of future rations was left to Mr. King, but it was clearly understood by him and also explained to the detainees that the ration was given to supplement local food supplies and any attempt to take advantage of it or failure to at once plant up their gardens would result in it being withdrawn. It is not possible at present to fix a date on which the Government ration should cease but from such information as is available I should think it would be necessary to continue the ration on a gradually diminishing scale for about six months.

No useful purpose seemed likely to be served by making further arrangements at the moment, but the general idea is that the District Officer, Malaita, should take an early opportunity of getting in touch with these people, Mr. King and his patrol gradually

fading out of the picture as it was found possible to resume ordinary administrative measures.

Considerable prominence has been given in the Press abroad to the admittedly high death-rate among the detainees and it seemed to me only fair to the Administration that the fullest enquiry should be made into the cause or causes of each mortality. The number of deaths and the causes as certified by the medical officers are as follows :—

Bacillary Dysentery	...	...	...	...	16
Senility	...	...	...	...	6
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	3
Insanity	...	...	...	...	1
Chronic Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1
Unknown	...	...	...	...	1
					—
					28
					—

The difference between this figure and 25 given on page 14 is due to the fact that three deaths occurred between the date of my arrival on 6th July and the 23rd of July, up to which date these statistics were compiled.

It will be observed that bacillary dysentery was responsible for more than half the number of deaths. This disease is endemic in the Solomon Islands and it is, therefore, not possible to state with certainty the sources of infection, but a cumulation of facts seems to indicate that it was introduced by the Sinarango prisoners themselves and most probably by the last batch who arrived on 14th February, 1928. The epidemic began at the end of February. I am led to this conclusion by the following facts. In the first place, prior to the epidemic there was no unusual incidence of dysentery among the police or ordinary prisoners, with whom alone the Sinarangos were in contact from the time of their arrival at various dates from November, 1927, onwards. Several cases, however, occurred among the police and prisoners subsequent to the outbreak of the epidemic. It has been suggested that the change of diet from native foodstuffs to the ordinary prison ration may have been a predisposing cause, but this seems to be completely refuted by the fact that, though many of the Sinarango prisoners had been fed on prison rations for varying periods between November and February, not a single case of dysentery occurred among them until the epidemic flared up. Cases occurred, when the epidemic broke out, among the Sinarango prisoners both in the police lines and in the prison, and it seems almost incredible that it should have broken out in two such widely separated areas, passing over the police and other prisoners, unless the exposure had taken place prior to arrival at Tulagi.

As soon as it was evident that an epidemic was threatening, all possible precautions were taken to check it. All cases were isolated either in the hospital or in a building in the prison specially fitted out for the purpose. A fly-proof latrine was erected and an automatically-closing fly-proof latrine-box was provided in each prison hut for use at night. All eating utensils were boiled after use. In order to detect fresh cases the prisoners were inspected four times daily, twice by the gaoler and twice by a medical officer. By the beginning of April the epidemic as such may be said to have been over, only a few cases, mostly relapses, occurring after that date. Of the 16 deaths, 13 were of old men whose physical condition was not such as to make them able to withstand any acute infection, and one was in addition to dysentery suffering from ascites. Of the six deaths from senility recorded, the Senior Medical Officer writes: "These were old men in whom no evidence of any disease was found but who suffered from increasing feebleness and finally died from failure of the circulation." The other cases require no particular comment.

I am of opinion that the Administration is completely exonerated from any suggestion of callousness or neglect which is implied in the expression "The Black Hole of Tulagi" which I am informed appeared in one paper abroad. The prison and its precincts were spotlessly clean, the sleeping huts were well ventilated, and the food was sufficient and satisfactory both in quantity and quality. The water supply was good. The prisoners were not locked up during the daytime and could take exercise in the prison yard which is entirely open to the air. Before my arrival the detainees had been offered, and about 40 had voluntarily accepted, work on the clearing of a site for a quarantine station, for which they were paid at the ordinary labour rates. On an assurance from me that acceptance of this work would not delay their repatriation the number was doubled. Apart from the cases already referred to, the general health of the detainees has been good and they have greatly improved in their physical condition since their arrival.

Native Administration.

After a short stay of only two months in the Protectorate I approach this subject with the greatest diffidence, but I have had the opportunity of discussing it with officials, missionaries, and planters, and there are certain broad aspects of the question on which I may perhaps venture to express an opinion.

A Resident Commissioner was appointed to the Group in 1896 and established himself at Tulagi in 1897. From then onwards the sphere of administration was gradually extended, stations being established at Gizo in 1899, Shortland in 1906, Auki (Malaita) in 1909, Aola (Guadalcanal) in 1914, Kirakira (San Cristoval) and

Tunnibuli (Ysabel) in 1918, and Vanikoro (Santa Cruz) in 1923. In the early stages the relations between the Administration and the natives were necessarily in the main punitive; head hunting and inter-island and inter-tribal wars were rife and murder was almost a feature of daily life; their repression was essential before any settled form of administration could be introduced. Communication within the islands was very difficult and much had to be left to the discretion of the District Officer on the spot. Perusal of the Statute Book shows that with the exception of the Native Lands Regulation there was practically no legislation directly affecting the natives prior to 1920. In that year the Native Tax Regulation was passed, followed in 1921 by the Labour Regulation, and in 1922 by the Native Administration Regulation. This last Regulation was amended in 1927. The object of this amending Regulation was, however, merely to give proper legal effect to certain rules made under the Regulation of 1922.

Prior to the enactment of this Regulation the administration of the native was entirely direct, that is, it was carried out by the District Officer and his small force of police, the native taking no active part in its working. The object of the Regulation, which authorises the appointment of district and village headmen and village constables, prescribes their duties and provides for their remuneration, was, obviously, to give the native some share in the administration and to provide a chain of communication between the village unit and the District Officer.

Before examining the working of this Regulation during the short five or six years of its existence, or appraising the results, it is necessary to try and visualise the raw material or foundations on which the structure had to be built and take into consideration certain factors which tended to assist or retard its construction. In the first place, there was no central native authority on any one island, or even a few big chiefs, as, for example, in Fiji, whose co-operation could be secured and through whom, in consultation with and under the guidance of the District Officer, administration could be carried on. There appears to be evidence to show that at one time there was a recognised chief of a tribe, the appointment being hereditary, either patrilineal or matrilineal according to circumstances, but liable to be usurped by anyone who gained a big reputation for bravery or skill in warfare. However that may be and whether, as I believe, this disintegration was hastened by two factors, the return to their villages of the natives who had worked in Queensland and Fiji, in some cases for a number of years, and the spread of missionary influence, the fact remains that in 1920, except possibly in a few instances, the unit of native administration on which the District Officer had to build was the head of the clan or "line," to give it the local name, which has been already described as a "somewhat loosely knit conglomeration of families but with a definite head either

elected or hereditary." On each island there are several tribes, on Malaita, for instance, running into two figures. There is no common language, each tribe having its own or at best a different dialect of a language common to itself and a few of its immediate neighbours. The villages except in the coastal area are widely scattered in country extremely difficult of access to Europeans. The natives, in the hill areas at any rate, are secretive, unresponsive, and very suspicious, and have the reputation of being revengeful and treacherous. Not a very promising field on which to build up any native administration.

It seems a pity that when the Regulation was passed it was not accompanied by a memorandum explaining its objects and indicating in general terms the methods which should be adopted to gradually bring it into operation, and more particularly that the "go slow" signal was not hoisted. In the absence of any such lead each District Officer took his own line in applying the Regulation. Some, such as the late Mr. Bell, realised that if any real progress was to be made a long and laborious building up was ahead of them and moved slowly accordingly. Others appear to have considered it their duty to put the Regulation into operation as soon as possible, with the result that an artificial structure has been superimposed on foundations ill fitted to bear its weight.

The main difficulty in the scheme has been the selection of district headmen. In very few instances were there natives who from their intelligence and influence were suitable for such an appointment and acceptable to the people over whom they were placed. Where such existed the scheme is working reasonably well; where they did not, I think it would have been better, as has been done in some cases, not to appoint a district headman at all and to deal with the village headmen direct until such time as a suitable candidate emerged from among the village headmen. A most satisfactory feature is that, except where the person nominated is obviously unsuitable, the person selected by the villagers as their head is so recognised by the Government. The village headman has, it must be remembered, very little real power even in his own village, his habits and standard of living are practically identical with those of his neighbours, and he has no sort of "court." Where missionary influence is strong I am inclined to think that such power as he did possess is gradually passing into the hands of the teacher, more particularly in matters outside the purely domestic affairs of the village. In expressing this opinion I wish it to be clearly understood that I do not suggest that that is the policy of one or any of the missionary bodies or that they encourage it in any way, but it is only natural, when one of their number is more educated and, therefore, probably more intelligent than his fellows, has been closely associated with the white man, and has a knowledge of his ways, that he should be consulted by the villagers and his advice taken

in matters connected with the Government and the outside world. The villages are so small that there is not room for "two kings" and I believe the general tendency will be for the duties of the temporal and spiritual heads to be merged in one person and that that person will be the teacher.

I do not suggest that this would necessarily be bad, in fact it might be the very opposite provided that it is no way forced and comes into being naturally and at the wish of the people. If my surmise is correct, it is in any case a factor that cannot be ignored and might well lead to that close co-operation between the Government and the missionary societies in native administration that is so eminently desirable.

Any preconceived notions I may have had for grafting on the Solomon Islands the principles of indirect government borrowed from experience in Nigeria, and as applied more nearer home in Fiji, received such a succession of shocks in the first few weeks of my stay in the Protectorate that I was almost driven to the conclusion that the directest of direct rule was the only solution of the problem. With a little further experience, very little I acknowledge, I believe that there is some hope with patience and very slowly of building up a native administration in which the people will have a real share. It must, however, be a gradual growth, with the village unit as the seed. Whether that has so deteriorated as to have lost its power of germination only an experiment can show, but if the plant shows any sign of growth, it will require the most careful nursing and the personal supervision of the gardener (the District Officer) if it is to grow into a tree.

It seems very desirable that, on the islands of Malaita and Guadalcanal at any rate, where the problem is more acute and the difficulties of transport are greatest, the District Officers appointed should be comparatively young and active, they should be given a very clear idea of the objects and reasons of the policy of the Government, and it should be particularly impressed upon them that it is only by constantly visiting the natives in their villages and by taking an interest in their affairs that their confidence can be gained. I am afraid that at the present moment the majority of natives look on the District Officer merely as a tax gatherer or one who metes out punishment, and the first task should be to dispel that idea. I fully appreciate all the difficulties of transport, diversity of languages and consequently of interpretation, and inaccessibility of villages, but I am convinced that only by working on the lines suggested can a better understanding of the native and his needs be achieved.

It is essential to the success of any such scheme that the Districts should not be too large and should be sufficiently staffed. At

present an arrangement for dividing Malaita into two Districts is well advanced. The actual boundary between the two Districts has not yet been fixed, but when a decision is being come to it is essential that a tribal boundary should be selected. This should be comparatively easy, as the tribes appear to run in broad bands across the Island and have an outlet on both the east and west coast. As regards staff, I am of opinion that the two Districts on Malaita and the Guadalcanal District each requires a District Officer and an Assistant or a Cadet, one of whom should be always on the move visiting the villages. On these visits the question of tax collection and the judicial side of the officers' duties should be obtruded as little as possible. The time and place for tax payment should be fixed well in advance and communicated to the natives, a reminder being sent a short time before the date through the district or village headmen. The tax should be paid by the individual to the District Officer. A system which I found in operation in one District by which the village headman collected the tax for his village and paid it over in bulk to the District Officer seems to me open to the strongest objection. In the instance quoted it came to my notice through the natives asking me a question which was quaintly interpreted as, "Is the tax collected from the quick and the dead?" Investigation showed that in three instances the village headman had been called upon to pay the tax for men who were alive on 1st April, when in theory the tax falls due, but had died before the date of collection fixed by the District Officer. To do this the village headman had had to have a whip round. In this instance the obvious injustice was rectified, but it should never have been allowed to occur.

In the western end of the Group, in the Districts of Gizo and Shortland, the administrative difficulties are far less acute. The population is small, the natives are practically all under missionary influence, they do not, except in a few instances, enlist for work on plantations, and they have no difficulty in obtaining the money for their taxes by either leasing their coconut groves or working them themselves. Faisi, in the Shortland District, is a port of entry and should have a Medical Officer stationed there. In my opinion this officer could, if provided with an auxiliary vessel, quite well also carry out the duties of District Officer. In the Gizo District the ordinary administrative duties could be quite well carried out by one officer if he could devote his whole time for the purpose, but his duties connected with post office and customs work, if not of a very onerous nature, tie him to his headquarters for longer periods than is compatible with the performance of his other duties. It is a matter for consideration whether a Cadet or an officer trained in postal and customs work should be stationed in the District to remedy this. I am personally inclined to think that a Cadet would be more generally useful.

The practice of sending out what are locally called "police patrols" unaccompanied by a white officer to effect arrests or to convey orders from the District Officer to the villages is one which is easy to criticise and is open to many abuses, as under existing conditions in Malaita and Guadalcanal these "patrols" must necessarily go armed. What is not easy is to suggest a practical alternative, and until the administrative machine is working more smoothly and District Officers have gained the confidence of the natives I do not find myself able to put one forward. The policy already in operation of enlisting men for the police in the Districts in which they are to serve commends itself strongly to me. "Patrols" consisting of police conversant with the customs and speaking the language of the people to whom they are sent are much less likely to cause trouble than strangers from another District. In all cases the "patrols" should have definite orders to proceed direct to the district or village headman as the case may be, and arrests should be effected or orders circulated as far as possible by such headmen. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to add that such patrols should be used as sparingly as possible.

Medical.

No branch of the Administration has been subjected to such adverse criticism as the Medical Department, but while it must be admitted that a good deal of the criticism had some justification the great difficulties of providing for the medical needs of a widely scattered European and native population with very inadequate transport facilities, and an expenditure necessarily limited by budget considerations, do not appear to have been fully realized.

The present Government Medical Establishment consists of:—

- 1 Senior Medical Officer.
- 1 Travelling Medical Officer.
- 1 Medical Officer.
- 2 Nursing Sisters.
- 1 Dispenser and Clerk.

With the exception of the Medical Officer who is normally stationed at Gizo this staff is concentrated at Tulagi where there is a well-equipped hospital with accommodation for European, Asiatic, and native patients. The services of the Travelling Medical Officer for work in the hospital are only available when he is not, as the title of his appointment implies, travelling round the various islands visiting the native villages and inspecting the labour on the plantations, for which purpose he is provided with a suitable auxiliary vessel. There are small Government native hospitals at Gizo, under the charge of the Medical Officer stationed there, at Vanikoro under the charge of the Medical Officer of the timber company operating at that port, and at Su'u under the charge of Mrs. McCrimmon, the wife of a resident trader, who is

fully qualified. The two latter are subsidized by the Government and provided with drugs. Owing to their private duties and consequent inability to travel, their work, extremely useful as it is, is necessarily confined to a comparatively small radius within which the natives will or can come in for treatment.

There is also a Medical Officer and a native hospital at Roviana, the headquarters of the Methodist Mission in the Gizo District. This institution receives a Government subsidy, and as the medical officer is provided with European Nursing Sisters he is able when transport is available to do a certain amount of travelling and visit the native villages. The Melanesian Mission have arranged to place a medical officer at some point not yet definitely settled—I understand on the Northern end of Malaita—and when started this institution will also receive a Government subsidy. The Superintendent of the Seventh Day Adventist Mission informed me that if a Government subsidy were promised he would establish a hospital with a qualified medical officer in the Marovo Lagoon in the Gizo District. An intensive campaign against yaws and hook-worm was commenced this year with the assistance of the Rockefeller Institute. The two units are at present working on Malaita.

With the exception of Vanikoro, I visited the various hospitals and discussed matters fully with Dr. Hetherington, the Senior Medical Officer. I have come to the conclusion that the immediate policy of the Government should be to continue and extend the present intensive campaign and concentrate on the mass treatment of the natives, utilizing to the full and encouraging by subsidy the existing and projected missionary medical institutions. The natives have shown themselves as a general rule not only amenable to this mass treatment but anxious to have it, and full advantage should be taken of this attitude.

For the purpose of such mass treatment there is no necessity to employ fully qualified medical officers, and the proposal which is now being examined in detail by a local committee is to station two of these officers on Malaita and one each on Guadalcanal, Ysabel, and San Cristoval. They would be under the immediate supervision of the Travelling Medical Officer. In my opinion, taking all conditions including the financial aspect into consideration, the scheme is framed to bring the greatest good to the greatest number.

A fully-equipped hospital capable of receiving both European and native patients with a Resident Medical Officer on the lines of the Tulagi Hospital will probably have to be established in the future at some convenient centre in the western end of the Group, but for the present I am of opinion that the medical requirements would be reasonably met by the following arrangements:—

Faisi.—A Government Medical Officer who would also perform the duties of the District Officer.

Gizo.—The missionary medical officers at Roviana and Marovo Lagoon (when established).

Malaita.—The missionary medical officer on the north and the present hospital at Su'u together with the two mass treatment units.

Santa Cruz.—The timber company's medical officer.

The needs of Ysabel, Guadalcanal, and San Cristoval would be met by the Travelling Medical Officer and the men carrying out the mass treatment, as indicated in the previous paragraph.

Education.

As already noted in one of the earlier paragraphs of this Report the education of the natives is entirely in the hands of the various missionary societies, who receive no financial assistance from the Government except a small grant where technical education forms part of the curriculum. At the present stage the primary object of the mission schools is to train up youths to fit them to become teachers in the villages coming within the field in which the particular mission works, and as far as I could ascertain the demand is in excess of the supply so that some years must elapse, except in a few exceptional cases, before educated natives are likely to become available for service under the Government or in commercial undertakings. I do not, however, think that the demand for trained natives outside the mission field is sufficiently pressing as to make it necessary for the Government to establish its own schools, nor does its financial position justify the expenditure that would be involved.

Except in the central schools of the missions the education has scarcely got beyond the kindergarten stage, but as the teachers become more fully trained an advance in that direction is certain to take place and as it is the schools do some good in inculcating habits of cleanliness, discipline, and order.

Owing to the diversity of the languages spoken within the Group it seems essential that the teaching should be in some lingua franca which would become the common language outside the village, and I would strongly support what I believe to be the view to which the majority of the missionary societies are coming that that language should be English. A short experience of the horrible variant of that language at present spoken leads one to encourage any attempt that may be made to obliterate it, but I do not think that this will be achieved by teaching English as a subject in the schools, but by teaching in English.

Land Tenure.

Land in the Protectorate is held by aliens either under freehold, Crown leases, or native leases. The first category presents no

difficulties, but as between the other two forms of leases a situation has arisen which causes a good deal of dissatisfaction and requires explanation.

At the outset, if an alien applied for a lease of land the policy of the Government was to acquire the land by purchase from the native and lease it to the applicant. Later on, the applicant was given with the consent of the Government a lease with the natives; this was not due as far as I can ascertain to any definite change of policy but to the fact that owing to the financial situation the Government had not available sufficient funds to meet the capital expenditure required for the purchase of the land. In the case of both forms of leases the rentals were identical and were on a gradually increasing scale, into the details of which it is not necessary to enter in this Report, except to say that the basis was the time it took for a plantation to come into full bearing.

No difficulty would have arisen had the original rentals been equitable and remained as fixed but, as a result of representations, it was proved that the full bearing period had been underestimated and that the rentals had been fixed at too high a figure. Proposals were placed before the Secretary of State for a revision of the leases both Crown and native in order to bring the rentals into conformity with what had been found by experience to be equitable.

The Secretary of State raised no objection to the revision of the Crown leases but held that in the case of native leases, the Government having entered into a contract on behalf of the native, no revision was to be made. The result was that holders of native leases were being called upon to pay a rental which was recognised as being in excess of the value of the land and more than the rentals paid by holders of Crown leases for similar land. The hardship of this was recognised and the Government has assisted the holders of native leases by paying the difference between the unrevised and revised rentals for the period between the tenth and fourteenth year of the lease.

This arrangement has met the case temporarily, but in a few years the same inequality will become apparent and it is unlikely that the Government will continue to pay indefinitely this compensation which is a considerable drain on its resources. There is a strong local feeling not only among the planters but also Government officials and members of the missions that no hardship would be inflicted on the natives who had no say in originally fixing the rentals if they were revised so as to conform to those now prevailing for Crown leases, but in view of the Secretary of State's decision this does not appear practicable.

The only solution I have to offer is that the Government should buy the properties concerned from the natives at a capital valuation of say fifteen years' purchase of existing rentals and re-assign to the lessees on Crown leases on the revised rentals.

Police and Prisons.

The Police Force, which has an establishment of two Officers and one hundred and twenty rank and file, is well-equipped and well-drilled and sufficient under normal circumstances for the needs of the Protectorate.

The policy of fixing the establishment for each District and recruiting locally in the District, the recruits being sent to Headquarters for three months' training, appears to me to be very sound. Owing to the variety of tribes and languages it seems very desirable that the police in a District should be acquainted with the customs of the people and be able to talk their language.

The period of enlistment for two years seems very short; it has been so fixed, I understand, to conform to the period of enlistment of labourers for the plantations. I am inclined to think it could be extended possibly to five years if the District system referred to in the previous paragraph is adhered to and a recruit after passing his drills was allowed to marry on his return to his District. The difficulty of applying this policy to those stationed at Tulagi could be met by the erection of married lines. The cost would not be great and would, I think, be amply repaid by the increased efficiency obtained by the longer period of enlistment. In addition the segregation of some 50 young unmarried men in Tulagi where there is no indigenous population seems to me both unnatural and undesirable. I am aware that similar conditions prevail on the plantations, but two wrongs do not make a right and I think it is the duty of the Government to set an example and encourage their employees to marry and bring their wives with them.

The prison at Tulagi is extremely well kept, the cells are well ventilated, the food is good, and there is a sufficient water supply. The prisoners are employed on useful public works and in sanitary gangs. In the out-stations the prisons are practically lock-ups, but as the number of prisoners, mainly serving short sentences, detained in them are only sufficient for the needs of the station they serve their purpose.

General.

The Commissioner of Lands and Crown Surveyor is also Superintendent of Works, for which he receives an allowance of £60 per annum. He has a European staff of two Surveyors, a Foreman of Works, and a clerk. The arrangement is economical, but when, as was the case when I was at Tulagi, the Commissioner of Lands was on leave and the post of the second Surveyor was vacant, all survey work was entirely suspended. I was shown a list of surveys waiting to be carried out and was surprised at the number. I understand that there is considerable difficulty in obtaining qualified surveyors at the salary offered, but it is, I think,

worthy of consideration whether it would not be advisable to employ a special field survey party for, say, two years to carry out the most urgent surveys even if higher salaries had to be paid to temporary men.

The Lands records appeared to be complete and, except for the absence of surveyed plans on the deeds, well kept.

The nature of the public works that have to be carried out, limited as they necessarily are by financial considerations, do not justify the employment of a qualified Engineer and the establishment of a separate Department.

It seems possible that one central store through which all Departments would draw their stores might lead to economy, but the time at my disposal was too short to allow of my making any detailed enquiries. It is, however, I think, worth investigation.

With inter-island communications at no time particularly easy or rapid, sometimes rendered almost impossible for several days by weather conditions, it seems very desirable that the fullest advantage should be taken of the latest wireless inventions for establishing communications over the comparatively short distances between the islands. I have no technical knowledge but am assured that sets, suitable for the purpose, that could be worked by natives trained to receive and send in the Morse Code are on the market and are comparatively inexpensive. If this is the case, their establishment at, say, Gizo, Cape Marsh, and Malaita would be invaluable not only for Government purposes but for the public generally.

H. C. MOORHOUSE.

22nd September, 1928.